

## RESOURCE:

### Preventative Care Checklist for Families

This checklist provides families with essential steps to proactively prevent nursing home abuse and neglect. Use this guide to stay involved, monitor care quality, and advocate for your loved one's well-being.

#### 1. Stay Actively Involved

- ♦ Visit frequently and at varying times of the day to observe different staff shifts and routines.
- ♦ Develop relationships with staff and caregivers to encourage accountability.
- ♦ Attend care plan meetings and stay informed about updates in treatment and daily care.
- ♦ Encourage social interactions and participation in activities to maintain emotional well-being.

#### 2. Monitor Physical and Emotional Well-Being

- ♦ Watch for sudden changes in mood, anxiety, or withdrawal, which may indicate mistreatment.
- ♦ Check for physical signs of neglect such as bedsores, bruises, unexplained injuries, or weight loss.
- ♦ Ensure proper hygiene and grooming are consistently maintained.
- ♦ Ask about any changes in medication, treatment, or medical diagnoses and request explanations for any sudden shifts in care.

#### 3. Assess Living Conditions

- ♦ Observe the cleanliness of the facility, including common areas, bathrooms, and individual rooms.
- ♦ Ensure proper safety measures are in place, such as handrails, emergency buttons, and secure exits to prevent wandering.
- ♦ Verify that meals are nutritious, served on time, and accommodate dietary needs.
- ♦ Listen for complaints from other residents about inadequate care, improper medication administration, or staff mistreatment.

## 4. Advocate for Quality Care

- ♦ Understand the resident's rights under state and federal laws, including protection from abuse and neglect.
- ♦ Keep detailed notes on care quality, interactions with staff, and any concerns that arise.
- ♦ Request and review medical records regularly to identify inconsistencies or potential red flags.
- ♦ Report any concerns to facility management promptly and document their response and any corrective actions taken.

## 5. Know the Warning Signs of Abuse and Neglect

- ♦ Unexplained injuries such as bruises, cuts, burns, or fractures.
- ♦ Frequent infections or bedsores, which may indicate inadequate medical attention.
- ♦ Malnutrition or dehydration due to lack of proper dietary care.
- ♦ Fearfulness, sudden behavioral changes, or reluctance to speak around certain staff members.
- ♦ Unexplained financial transactions, missing personal items, or sudden changes in financial documents.

## 6. Take Action if You Suspect Neglect or Abuse

- ♦ Document signs of mistreatment with photos, written notes, and medical records.
- ♦ Speak with nursing home administrators about concerns and request an action plan for improvement.
- ♦ File a report with Washington Adult Protective Services (APS) or the Long-Term Care Ombudsman if issues persist.
- ♦ Consult a legal professional to explore legal options for holding negligent caregivers accountable.

## Protect Your Loved One – Stay Engaged and Informed

Active family involvement is one of the best ways to prevent neglect and abuse. If you have concerns about a loved one's care, **Ron Meyers and Associates** can help. Contact us today for legal guidance and advocacy.